

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 and 10-20 are all the claims presently pending in the application. Claims 1, 3, 14, and 15 have been amended to more particularly define the invention.

It is noted that the claim amendments are made only for more particularly pointing out the invention, and not for distinguishing the invention over the prior art, narrowing the claims or for any statutory requirements of patentability. Further, Applicants specifically state that no amendment to any claim herein should be construed as a disclaimer of any interest in or right to an equivalent of any element or feature of the amended claim.

Claims 3-5, 7, 11, and 13-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Yasuhara (U.S. Publication No. 2003/0053638 A1). Claims 1-2, 4, 6, 10, 12, and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yasuhara in view of the Applicant's Admitted Prior Art (AAPA).

These rejections are respectfully traversed in the following discussion.

I. THE CLAIMED INVENTION

The claimed invention as recited by, for example, independent claim 1, is directed to an acoustic device including a plurality of sound sources, a first output unit for outputting sound based on sound signals from the sound sources, the first output unit including a first switch which is capable of turning on a power supply to the acoustic device, a second output unit for outputting sound based on sound signals from the sound sources, the second output unit including a second switch which is capable of turning off the power supply to the acoustic device, a mode setting unit setting either one of a first mode, in which the sound based on the sound signals from one of the sound sources are output from the first output unit, and a second

mode, in which while the sound based on the sound signals from one of the sound sources are being output from the first output unit, the sound signals from another sound source are output from the second output unit, and a control unit for controlling the mode setting unit to set the first mode or the second mode when the power supply to the acoustic device is turned on by the first switch, and controlling the mode setting unit to set the second mode and controlling the first output unit to stop outputting of the sound when the power supply to the acoustic device is turned on by the second switch.

In a conventional vehicular audio system having dual media function, a dual mode can be set in response to the predetermined operation of the front operation unit. In the dual mode thus set, different sound sources can be provided for the speaker and the headphone. Therefore, the front and rear passengers can accept sound signals from the different sound sources through the speaker and the headphone. (See Application at page 3, lines 8-15).

However, since only the front operation unit sets the dual mode, the rear passenger cannot set the audio system in the dual mode. Therefore, the rear passenger has to ask the front passenger to set the dual mode through the front operation unit so that the front passenger is burdened with the setting operations. (See Application at page 3, lines 23-25).

In stark contrast to the conventional control units, in the present invention, when the remote operation unit is arranged in the rear of the vehicle, the power source can be turned ON in the dual mode without burdening the operations of the front passenger. (See Application at page 5, lines 1-7). Also, when the rear passenger turns ON the power source in the dual mode, it is possible to reliably prevent the situation, in which the front passenger might otherwise be threatened by a sudden speaker output. (See Application at page 11, lines 16-24).

II. THE PRIOR ART REFERENCE

A. § 102 Rejection over Yasuhara

The Examiner alleges that Yasuhara teaches the claimed invention of claims 3, 5, 7, 11, and 13-19. The Applicants submit, however, that Yasuhara does not teach or suggest each and every feature of the claimed invention.

Claim 3 recites, inter alia:

*“a first mode, in which the sound based on the sound signals from one of the sound sources are output from the first output unit, and
a second mode, in which while the sound based on the sound signals from one of the sound sources are being output from the first output unit, the sound signals from another sound source are output from the second output unit;”*

Claim 14 includes similar features as those recited by claim 3 above.

According to the claimed invention, the acoustic device can select a single mode (first mode) in which a speaker outputs sound based on a signal from a sound source and a dual mode (second mode) in which the speaker outputs sound based on a signal from a sound source and a headphone outputs sound based on a signal from a different sound source. Also, if the acoustic device is turned on by an operation unit for a rear side, then the acoustic device starts with the dual mode (second mode), and outputting of the speaker is stopped.

In contrast, Yasuhara discloses that a remote controller is provided for a rear system and, according to the operations of the remote controller, the rear system is controlled. However, Yasuhara fails to teach or suggest that an acoustic device is turned on in response to an operation to the remote controller. That is, Yasuhara fails to teach or suggest that if the acoustic device is turned on by an operation unit for the rear side, then the acoustic device starts with the dual mode and outputting of a speaker is stopped. Therefore, the claimed invention is not anticipated by Yasuhara.

Yasuhara also fails to teach or suggest, *“a first output unit for outputting sound based on sound signals from the sound sources, the first output unit including a first switch which is capable of turning on a power supply to the acoustic device; a second output unit for outputting sound based on sound signals from the sound sources, the second output unit including a second switch which is capable of turning off the power supply to the acoustic device;” or “a control unit for controlling the mode setting unit to set the first mode or the second mode when the power supply to the acoustic device is turned on by the first switch, and controlling the mode setting unit to set the second mode and controlling the first output unit to stop outputting of the sound when the power supply to the acoustic device is turned on by the second switch.”*

Since the Applicants submit that there are elements of the claimed invention that are not taught or suggested by Yasuhara, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this rejection.

B. § 103 Rejection over Yasuhara and AAPA

The Examiner alleges that Yasuhara, when combined with AAPA, renders obvious claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 10, 12, and 20. The Applicants submit, however, that Yasuhara does not teach or suggest each and every feature of the claimed invention.

As discussed previously, Yasuhara fails to teach or suggest, *“a first mode, in which the sound based on the sound signals from one of the sound sources are output from the first output unit, and a second mode, in which while the sound based on the sound signals from one of the sound sources are being output from the first output unit, the sound based on the sound signals from another sound source are output from the second output unit;”* which is recited by claim 3, and from which claim 1 similarly recites. AAPA also fails to remedy Yasuhara’s

deficiencies.

The Examiner does not even allege that AAPA teaches or suggests “*a first mode, in which the sound based on the sound signals from one of the sound sources are output from the first output unit, and a second mode, in which while the sound based on the sound signals from one of the sound sources are being output from the first output unit, the sound based on the sound signals from another sound source are output from the second output unit.*”

Instead, the Examiner merely alleges that AAPA teaches that the provision of a power ON/OFF in remote control units is well known in the art. (Office Action, page 10, lines 12-15).

Also, neither Yasuhara nor the AAPA teaches or suggests, “*a first output unit for outputting sound based on sound signals from the sound sources, the first output unit including a first switch which is capable of turning on a power supply to the acoustic device; a second output unit for outputting sound based on sound signals from the sound sources, the second output unit including a second switch which is capable of turning off the power supply to the acoustic device;” or “*a control unit for controlling the mode setting unit to set the first mode or the second mode when the power supply to the acoustic device is turned on by the first switch, and controlling the mode setting unit to set the second mode and controlling the first output unit to stop outputting of the sound when the power supply to the acoustic device is turned on by the second switch.”**

Since the Applicants submit that there are elements of the claimed invention that are not taught or suggested by Yasuhara, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this rejection.

III. FORMAL MATTERS AND CONCLUSIONS

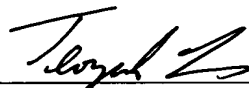
In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that claims 1-7 and 10-20, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully Submitted,

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